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ABSTRACT

This document describes the design and implementation of a screening procedure for a first grade readiness class which was receiving inappropriate referrals. The class was intended to serve normal children between kindergarten and first grade who seemed to need an extra year of maturation. Because students who exhibited discipline, emotional and learning problems had been placed in the readiness class, students who might have benefited from the extra year of maturation were sent to regular first grades where they encountered much difficulty. To ensure more appropriate placement, new referral procedures and forms were developed. Psychologists' recommendations, teachers' opinions (concerning student readiness, maturity and anticipated gains from placement in the program) and scores on the Slosson Intelligence Quotient Test (SIQT) and the Meeting Street School Screening Test (MSSST) were used to select candidates for the program. Staff communication and continuity between kindergarten and the readiness class were improved. Eighteen of 26 referred students were selected for a redesigned readiness program which emphasized language and motor skills and a learning centers approach. A program validation effort utilized pre- and posttesting with the MSSST and pretesting with the SIQT. It was concluded that all referred students were assigned to the most appropriate classes and no monies were misdirected. Cost benefits of the screening program are indicated. Screening program materials and forms are appended. (RH)

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TRANSITIONAL I CLASS:

EFFICIENT IMPLEMENTATION THROUGH SYSTEMATICALLY DESIGNED SELECTION CRITERIA

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Introductory Practicum Report
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INTRODUCTION

The Highlands School District is committed to the philosophy that every child is entitled to an educational program in which he is best able to function successfully. Provisions for this ideal are recognized within the school district. Thus, a task force was established to analyze and revise the ineffective selection process being used for a class called Transitional I. Students exiting kindergarten classes were indiscriminately being placed in the previously mentioned class without regard for need. Essentially, students with a multiplicity of problems were entering a class designed to provide immature children, with average ability, the opportunity to obtain an additional year of readiness before entering first grade. Since the district has ten elementary schools, eight of which have kindergartens servicing 360 students, it was imperative that a systematically designed selection process be developed to assure that the 18 students most needing the class would be selected. Thus the practicum was born to remedy a most obvious problem which was in direct opposition to school district philosophy.

CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

Students in most school districts enter first grade after completing a year in kindergarten, regardless of the level of readiness attained. Highlands School District, being relatively progressive, had seen fit to establish a class called Transitional I in 1974. This class was primarily designed to provide additional readiness for students who were of average intelligence but lacked needed maturity for success in grade one. Superficially, the class seemed to be the ideal solution for preventing eighteen students, annually, from meeting with consistent failure in a grade one setting. However, a series of problems had developed during the first two years of operation, graphically showing that the converse was true.

Initially, an analysis of the thirty-six students who had participated in the program during the first two years of operation revealed that twenty-five percent of the total were misplaced. Closer examination of the statistics uncovered the fact that four of the students were severe discipline problems, two were emotionally maladjusted and the other three had learning disabilities. Each of these children should have been referred for other available programs in the district which would have more effectively dealt with their needs. Instead these children were permitted to be part of the Transitional I class, thus causing much disruption and preventing the teacher from devoting her maximum effort to the seventy-five percent of the class needing her attention.

Directly resulting from the misplacement of those previously mentioned students, eight were denied the opportunity to attend the Transitional I class. Unfortunately, all of the eight students encountered

much difficulty in the regular first grade classroom and were eventually referred for retention. Lack of readiness in the instructional areas proved to be the major reason for failure.

Kindergarten teachers, through a spokesperson, complained bitterly that selection criteria were non-existent and they did not know how to adequately make recommendations for the class. The Transitional I classroom teacher echoed their concerns and said that the lone requisite for placement, average intelligence, was being overlooked. Examination of this allegation proved to be correct. Further stated, all students had been given the Slosson Intelligence Quotient Test and the scores ranged from seventy-eight to one hundred twelve. Six of the students tested scored below eighty-three, but were still placed in the class. According to the Slosson, which is a nationally normed test, students scoring in the eighty to eighty-nine range are considered to be dull average. Therefore, it was obvious to this observer that the class was operating without benefit of a systematic design for the selection of students.

Economics eventually became an issue, since district administrators were consistently being confronted with complaints about the worth of a class which seemed to be producing few positive results. Since Highlands expends approximately one thousand, one hundred dollars per year to educate a single student, the assumption was made that eighteen thousand, seven hundred dollars had been misdirected. That amount had been derived from the fact that seventeen students had either been ineligibly placed or kept from placement in the Transitional I class. Some school board members saw that amount of money, plus the annual salary of the teacher, as being exorbitant for a program that might be unnecessary. It had become imperative that refinement of the program must occur if it was to

be continued.

Summarizing, the specific needs for the Transitional I class in the Highlands School District were:

1. The initiation of a task force for the purpose of developing selection criteria to eliminate the placement of ineligible students in the Transitional I class.
2. The development of referral procedures with the appropriate forms being made available well in advance of selection.
3. The need for better communications among kindergarten teachers and the Transitional I teacher.
4. The need to incorporate the Meeting Street program being used in kindergarten with the Transitional I curriculum.
5. The need to increase student readiness for grade one as measured by pre testing on the Slosson Intelligence Quotient Test and pre and post testing on the Meeting Street School Survey Test.

Purpose of the Practicum

The purpose of developing a systematically designed selection criteria was to provide the teacher of the Transitional I class with students who would most likely benefit from the treatment to be received. The screening committee which included the director of pupil personnel, two elementary guidance counselors, the reading perceptual teacher, the Transitional I teacher, and the administrative assistant had the responsibility of ensuring that only prime candidates would be considered.

CHAPTER II

OBJECTIVES

Minimization of the problems identified within the Transitional I program at Highlands School District can best be obtained through the achievement of the following objectives.

1. The eighteen students enrolled in the program will increase their raw scores six to ten points as measured by a pre-post comparison on the Meeting Street School Screening Test within six months.
2. Misdirected funds in the amount of eighteen thousand, seven hundred dollars ($18,700) will be reduced eighty percent (80%) within six months, as measured by a pre-post comparison of fiscal records.
3. Ninety-five percent (95%) of the eighteen students enrolled will exhibit readiness for grade one within seven months as measured by pre testing on the Slosson and pre and post testing on the Meeting Street School Screening Test.

CHAPTER III

STRATEGY

The review of the literature was undertaken to provide information that the writer needed to implement selection criteria that would more adequately screen children for a class called Transitional I. Average intelligence had been deemed the only criterion necessary for student selection into the class and the results had been disastrous. The writer began searching for data that would support the belief that intelligence alone would not be acceptable as the sole criteria for student selection into the class. Since the concept of the transitional grade level is relatively new, little literature was available; however, related literature on auditory and perceptual learning disabilities provided a base from which to screen students who could not benefit from a class geared to maturationally unprepared students for grade one.

Carman (1970) suggested that students with learning disabilities could be identified in kindergarten, through the use of the Meeting Street School Screening Test. This test, using four subsets, predicted potential learning disability candidates and assisted this writer in developing criteria that would ensure that they not be considered for the Transitional I class. More specifically, kindergarten students achieving a combined score of thirty-nine or more were considered good risk candidates for the class. It was also suggested that students scoring in the six to ten range on the language section of the test would be more inclined to benefit from the class and eventually succeed in a grade one setting. Additionally, this information, coupled with the intelligence factor provided a sound base from which students would

eventually be selected for placement in the class. The Slosson Intelligence Quotient Test which is nationally normed and measures innate ability, specified that children scoring in the ninety to one hundred nine range were considered to be of average intelligence. Findings of this nature enabled the task force to embark upon a review of in-district records for previous Transitional I students and establish appropriate criteria for selection.

Supportive data from Wisner (1974) and Frostig (1966) suggested that many children enter school without having developed the proper learning patterns. Extreme problems arise for children of this caliber when thrust into the school setting and expected to compete with their peers. Clearly, they are at a distinctive disadvantage and tend to only half learn concepts and skills which are essential to future learning. Continuation of this trend through the school years only serves to widen the learning gap and causes failure and frustration for the student. Therefore, this writer felt even more strongly about the value of a Transitional I class. Children fitting the proper criteria were most assuredly going to be given another chance to secure the readiness necessary for a successful experience in grade one. At the same time, those not meeting the criteria would be referred to other staff members who work with learning disabilities at a much earlier age. It seemed reasonable to continue with the practicum, since not only the immature students would benefit from Transitional I, but those ineligible would also be channeled to people who would give them the necessary help needed.

After deciding to implement the practicum, it became essential to see how the curriculum could be modified to assist students in bettering their performance. The first step taken was the analysis of the Meeting Street School Screening Pre-Test data. Findings revealed major deficiencies in the areas of motor skills and language development. The teachers involved, with this writer's direction, decided that a curriculum emphasizing activities in each of the areas would be the best approach.

Motor skill activities were deemed to be necessary for the proper development of eye and hand coordination as well as preparation for reading. A series of activities revolving around hopping, skipping, jumping and marching were developed and used daily. Students were taught the proper way to do each of the activities and encouraged to practice daily with peers. Further, games calling for the use of hands and feet were implemented. Many of the activities were built into opening or closing exercises for the day. It was most common to see students marching around the classroom to a record which gave specific directions to be followed. Students were also encouraged to observe each other, thus prompting imitation which was most helpful for some of the students with severe motor deficiencies.

Language skills were agreed to be the heart of the curriculum and teachers worked diligently to provide students with activities. Specific activities were built around the skills outlined below.

A. LISTENING:
1. Responds to name when spoken.
2. Responds to and talks with other children when spoken to.
3. Responds to spoken directions.
4. Responds to recorded sounds - loud, soft, etc.
5. Recognizes various animal sounds.
6. Reproduces or imitates sounds heard, poems, etc.
7. Listens to stories - poems - records.
8. Listens to recall stories.

B. SPEAKING:
1. Takes part in show and tell time.
2. Talks about pictures and other work.
3. Takes part in informal conversations.
4. Talks about experiences.
5. Retells stories.
6. Takes initiative in organizing group activity.
7. Dramatic opportunities - children tell own story.
8. Tells nursery rhymes and joins in discussion of them.

C. BUILDING CONCEPTS:
1. Provides many first hand experiences to develop word and object.
2. Identifying objects in picture collections, as in Peabody Language Kit.
3. Classifies pictures as toys, food, etc.
4. Associates labels with object.

D. VISUAL PERCEPTION:
1. Color discrimination.
2. Observes shapes.
3. Observes spatial relationship.
4. Observes size.
5. Sees things alike and different.

E. AUDITORY PERCEPTION:
1. Listens for difference in sounds around us.
2. Listens for animal sounds.
3. Use of rhythm instrument to determine number of times- fast-slow, loud-soft.
4. Hears rhyming sounds.
5. Hears initial sounds.
6. Reproduces sounds and words correctly.

F. TACTILE PERCEPTION:
1. Identifies objects by touch alone.
2. Identifies numerals by touch alone.
3. Identifies shapes by touch alone.

G. WORK HABITS:
1. Works as member of a group.
2. Responsible for materials used.
3. Completes tasks.
4. Shows pride in accomplishment.

H. LETTER FORMATION:
1. Forms shapes - (Circles, squares, rectangles).
2. Forms shapes with clay.
3. Forms shapes with water and brush on chalkboard.
4. Forms shapes with chalk.

I. LITERATURE:
1. Looks at picture books.
2. Listens to stories, poems, records.
3. Learns finger plays.
4. Dramatizes favorite stories.
5. Draws pictures of favorite stories.

Another important area of curriculum change was the way in

which teachers actually taught the lessons. Previously, students were taught in a whole group method with all students getting essentially the same doses of instruction. This system would not have permitted the modified curriculum to be used to its fullest value. Thus, the teachers decided to move to a learning centers approach when working with motor or language skills. Each classroom teacher developed four learning stations at which students could experiment or practice. Students were grouped according to need and directed to a particular center for a fifteen minute period. The teacher would be stationed at the center for which a new concept or skill was being taught, thus being able to aid each student. The other centers were geared to reinforcement of previously taught skills allowing students to work independently. All teachers agreed that the first few weeks might cause some confusion but felt that, in the final analysis, the system would prove to be beneficial for students.

CHAPTER IV

PROCEDURE

Administrative Approval for the Practicum

The writer was beginning his first year as administrative assistant to the superintendent and was faced with coordinating the operation of the Transitional I class in Highlands School District. Immediate assessment of the program revealed that little in the way of criteria existed for selecting students. Consequently many students were misplaced, money was being misused and the program had become a dumping ground for all problem students. Resulting from these needs, a meeting with the Superintendent produced approval to initiate this practicum.

Formation of a Task Force

Key personnel within the district were approached and asked to participate in the practicum. Each member possessed specific talents which would allow essential input to surface and were told that a systematic design for selecting students for the program would be the major objective. Additionally, a complete assessment of the two year old program needed to be made with an eye to refinement as necessary. Members of the task force are as follows:

Director of Pupil Personnel

Two Elementary Counselors

Reading Perceptual Teacher

Transitional I Teacher

Administrative Assistant

Description of the Task Force Members' Roles

The roles of the personnel that comprised the task force were consistent with specific aspects of their already existing job descriptions.

However, highlighted areas of each job description were emphasized to capitalize on the strengths of each individual. Following is a description of each role as it applied to the task force:

The Director of Pupil Personnel. The Director of Pupil Personnel served as an interpreter of scores achieved on the Slosson Intelligence Quotient Test and also indicated student potential for a class of this type. Additionally, he provided resource data about other special services available to students if they did not meet the stated criteria. He also assisted in providing information regarding other measurement tools which might be considered.

The Elementary Counselors. The two counselors played a major role in the eventual placement of students. First they were responsible for administering the Slosson Intelligence Quotient Test to prospective candidates. They also assisted in the interpretation of scores and analyzed data for student selection. Advising parents as to the nature of the program and its merit was a key aspect of their role as well. This function was highly public relations oriented and did much to make parents knowledgable and comfortable when they received written forms seeking their permission for their child to participate.

The Reading Perceptual Teacher. The reading perceptual teacher was utilized for her knowledge of the Meeting Street Program which was being used in all kindergarten classes. Active knowledge of each child's problems and skills necessary to interpret scores attained on the Meeting Street School Survey Test were among her major tasks. Additionally, she assured that pre/post testing of the aforementioned survey took place. She was also instrumental in the development of materials necessary to the Transitional I curriculum.

The Transitional I Teacher. The Transitional I teacher was instrumental in providing background material on children who had been in previous classes. This information was most essential in the development of selection criteria. Additionally, the teacher implemented the curriculum to ensure adequate growth for each child.

The Administrative Assistant. The administrative assistant served as the chairperson of the task force and was responsible for maintaining files, obtaining administrative approvals and keeping all persons involved abreast of changes. The development of forms, parent contacts, and communications with principals and kindergarten teachers were all coordinated by the administrative assistant.

Selection Criteria

Upon approval of the proposal, the task force was activated and began to review and assess existing data. Slosson Intelligence Quotient Test results for students who had been in the program the past two years were immediately reviewed to determine what part intelligence should play in the selection process. Analysis of data reviewed revealed that intelligence scores ranged from seventy-eight to one hundred twelve with eight children scoring below ninety, which is considered average ability on the Slosson Test. Teacher comments were also reviewed and found to be highly subjective and, in many cases, highly irrelevant to the intended purpose of the program. (See appendices A and B) Thus the task force became aware that if the class was to be successful, it would be essential to devise a screening process that would ensure that the students most able to benefit from the class would be selected. A series of meetings were conducted from which selection criteria and a referral form were developed. (See appendix C)

Referral Form

Once selection criteria were established, it became necessary to develop a referral form that would provide relevant information. The accomplishment of this task was done through a meeting of the task force. The incorporation of all selection criteria was considered to be the most important element. The agenda used to accomplish this goal is as follows:

Transitional I Class: Referral Form - Agenda

Tuesday, May 10, 1977

Highlands School District

David N. Pisani, Chairperson

I. Selection criteria

   A. Review specific criteria

   B. Discuss criteria necessary for referral form

II. Development of referral form components

   A. Vital statistics

   B. Slosson Intelligence Quotient data

   C. Meeting Street School Screening Test data

   D. Teacher comments

   E. Appropriate signatures

III. Consensus agreement on form.

The form was eventually typed and utilized by kindergarten teachers when the referral process began. Comments from kindergarten teachers were extremely positive and their eventual completion of the forms assisted the selection committee greatly when assessing data.

Slosson and Meeting Street Testing

After reviewing the selection criteria, kindergarten teachers were instructed to contact the appropriate guidance counselor to arrange Slosson

testing for students believed to be candidates for the class. Those students meeting the intelligence criteria were then given the Meeting Street School Screening Test to determine potential learning disabilities. The data from both tests were then recorded on the referral form and submitted to the administrative assistant by June 15, 1977.

Communications With Parents

The administrative assistant, after prioritizing referred students according to selection criteria, sent a letter explaining the program to the parents of the eighteen selected students. (See appendix D) Supportive telephone calls from the guidance counselors were made to the same parents to clarify any questions that might have arisen. The process worked extremely well, as evidenced by the fact that all parents returned permission slips with affirmative responses.

Follow-up to Selection of Students

After the selection of students had been finalized, the administrative assistant determined two important steps must follow. First the superintendent, principals, transitional I teacher, and the reading perception teacher must be notified of the finalized classlist. Accomplishment of this task was completed through a memo. (See appendix E) Lastly, a meeting involving the administrative assistant, the reading perception teacher and the transitional I teacher must be held to determine guidelines for the curriculum. Thus a meeting was held on Wednesday, August 5, 1977 and the agenda was as follows:

Transitional I Class: Curriculum Guidelines - Agenda

Wednesday, August 5, 1977

Highlands School District

David N. Pisani, Chairperson

I. Curriculum needs - (discuss)

II. Emphasis on curriculum areas - (decide)

III. Plans for school year

Direct results of the August meeting revealed that a learning center atmosphere would prevail with emphasis on motor and language development skills, and academic readiness skills necessary for grade one.

Implementation

As the class began, each person on the task force continued to follow through on the roles previously described. During the months September 1977 through December three task force meetings were held for the purpose of formative evaluation. An example of the agenda used is as follows:

Transitional I Class - Sample Agenda

Tuesday, October 11, 1977

Highlands School District

David N. Pisani, Chairperson

I. Student progress
   - A. Student one
   - B. Student two
   - C. Student three
   - D. Student four
   - E. Student five
   - F. Student six

II. Modifications to be made
   - A. Curriculum changes
   - B. Student changes

III. Procedures for testing
   - A. Who?
   - B. When?
   - C. Why?
   - D. Examiner

IV. Visitation schedule of program

A. How often?

B. Who?

C. What purpose?

Slosson Intelligence Quotient and Meeting Street School Screening Post Testing

All students in the class were given post tests for the Slosson Intelligence Quotient and Meeting Street School Screening Tests in January and February of 1978. The results have been tabulated in the section on evaluation.

CHAPTER V

EVALUATION

The first objective called for students enrolled in the Transitional I class to increase their raw scores six to ten points on the Meeting Street School Screening Test within six months. The evaluation of this objective was based on the Meeting Street School Screening Test data alone. The instrument contained four subsets which tested language, motor, visual and perceptual skills. Each sub section had a maximum of twenty points, and when combined comprised the total score. Test guidelines revealed that students of kindergarten age who scored below thirty-nine points were to be considered possible learning disability candidates and poor risks for the Transitional I class. Thus kindergarten students who had been screened had to score thirty-nine points or higher to be considered for acceptance. The data generated from the pre-test showed that all eighteen candidates selected scored thirty-nine points or higher. After placement and treatment in the class all eighteen students were posttested in February 1978 to determine progress. It had been hypothesized that a gain of six to ten points would indicate support that the candidates were not learning disabled and would benefit from the class and the additional year of maturation. Data gleaned from the post test were strongly supportive of the hypothesis, since one hundred percent of the eighteen students tested scored within the six to ten points range. Further, ten percent of the target population scored higher than the indicated point range. Table I graphically depicts scale score gains.

TABLE I

Pre-Post Meeting Street School Screening Test Comparison Scores

June 1977 and February 1978

Student Number	Age		Motor		Visual-Perceptual-Motor		Language		Scaled Scores		Language Gain	Scaled Score Gain
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post		
1	5-10	6-6	6	11	12	16	9	15	42	60	6	18
2	5- 7	6-3	8	12	9	12	10	16	42	53	6	11
3	5- 4	6-0	8	13	7	13	9	16	54	62	7	8
4	5- 5	6-1	7	12	7	11	10	17	39	47	7	8
5	6- 0	6-8	10	9	10	13	9	16	46	57	7	11
6	5- 9	6-5	8	13	13	16	15	23	48	60	8	12
7	5-11	6-1	10	14	9	13	11	17	52	60	6	8
8	5-10	6-6	5	9	9	12	9	15	39	54	6	15
9	5- 5	6-1	9	11	9	15	10	16	50	61	6	11
10	5- 7	6-3	6	9	9	18	9	15	42	61	6	19
11	5- 1	5-9	7	13	8	11	9	16	48	64	7	16
12	5- 8	6-4	7	13	10	11	9	15	42	50	6	8
13	5- 7	6-3	8	10	10	13	10	17	46	56	7	10
14	5-11	6-7	5	13	9	12	11	18	39	59	7	20
15	5- 7	6-3	6	10	7	11	9	17	39	51	8	12
16	6- 2	6-10	9	12	7	11	9	16	39	46	7	7
17	6- 4	7-0	5	8	9	13	11	18	40	48	7	8
18	5- 9	6-5	9	13	5	9	10	17	41	47	7	6

The second objective called for misdirected funds in the amount of eighteen thousand, seven hundred dollars to be reduced by a pre-post comparison of fiscal records. The amount of money indicated had been determined through analysis of students who had been either ineligibly placed in the experimental class or misplaced in grade one during the 1975-76 and 1976-77 school years. Analysis of table II will reveal how the amount was determined.

TABLE II

Ineligible and Misplaced Student Costs

1975-76 and 1976-77 School Years

Student Number	Grade Placement	Reason Misplaced	Cost Per Pupil
1	First	Qualified for Transitional I	$1100.00
2	First	Qualified for Transitional I	1100.00
3	Transitional I	Had a learning disability	1100.00
4	Transitional I	Had a learning disability	1100.00
5	Transitional I	Severe discipline problem	1100.00
6	First	Qualified for Transitional I	1100.00
7	First	Qualified for Transitional I	1100.00
8	Transitional I	Severe Discipline Problem	1100.00
9	Transitional I	Had a learning disability	1100.00
10	First	Qualified for Transitional I	1100.00
11	First	Qualified for Transitional I	1100.00
12	First	Qualified for Transitional I	1100.00
13	Transitional I	Severe Discipline Problem	1100.00
14	Transitional I	Had a learning disability	1100.00
15	Transitional I	Had a learning disability	1100.00
16	Transitional I	Had a learning disability	1100.00
17	First	Qualified for Transitional I	1100.00
			$18700.00

All students screened for the 1977-78 class were either properly placed in the Transitional I class or referred for more appropriate placement within the district. Table III shows the disposition of referred students to the Transitional I class for the 1977-78 school year.

TABLE III

Disposition of Referred Students to the Transitional I Class

1977-78 School Year

Student Number	Suggested Placement By The Teacher	Actual Placement	Reason For Placement
1	Transitional I	Transitional I	Met Criteria For Selection
2	Transitional I	Transitional I	Met Criteria For Selection
3	Transitional I	Learning Disability Class	Psychological Testing
4	Transitional I	Transitional I	Met Criteria For Selection
5	Transitional I	Socially/Emotionally Disturbed Class	Psychological Testing
6	Transitional I	Transitional I	Met Criteria For Selection
7	Transitional I	Transitional I	Met Criteria For Selection
8	Transitional I	First Grade	Data Did Not Suggest Further Testing Or Placement In Transitional I
9	Transitional I	Transitional I	Met Criteria For Selection
10	Transitional I	Transitional I	Met Criteria For Selection
11	Transitional I	Transitional I	Met Criteria For Selection
12	Transitional I	Learning Disability Class	Psychological Testing
13	Transitional I	Transitional I	Met Criteria For Selection
14	Transitional I	Learning Disability Class	Psychological Testing
15	Transitional I	Transitional I	Met Criteria For Selection
16	Transitional I	Transitional I	Met Criteria For Selection
17	Transitional I	First Grade	Data Did Not Suggest Further Testing Or Placement In Transitional I
18	Transitional I	Transitional I	Met Criteria For Selection
19	Transitional I	Transitional I	Met Criteria For Selection
20	Transitional I	Learning Disability Class	Psychological Testing
21	Transitional I	Transitional I	Met Criteria For Selection
22	Transitional I	Socially/Emotionally Disturbed Class	Psychological Testing
23	Transitional I	Transitional I	Met Criteria For Selection
24	Transitional I	Transitional I	Met Criteria For Selection
25	Transitional I	Transitional I	Met Criteria For Selection
26	Transitional I	Transitional I	Met Criteria For Selection

Analysis of table III revealed that all students referred for the Transitional I class were either appropriately placed in the Transitional I class, grade one, or referred to the school psychologist for testing. Direction of this nature ensured that all referred students were assigned to the most appropriate classes and no monies had been misdirected.

The final objective stated that ninety-five percent (95%) of the eighteen (18) students selected for the Transitional class would exhibit readiness for grade one as measured by a pre test on the Slosson Intelligence Quotient Test and a pre-post test on the Meeting Street School Screening Test. A curriculum geared to the development of motor and language skills was initiated to prepare students for grade one. Previous data had alerted this writer to the fact that average intelligence and motor skill development were essential to the preparation of immature children for grade one. Based on that information, the aforementioned tests were used to assess the hypothesis. Tables I and IV demonstrate the fact that stable intelligence scores and increased motor skills have been instrumental in preparing the referred students for grade one.

TABLE IV

Slosson Intelligence Quotient Test Scores

June 1977

Student Number	Chronological Age		Intelligence Quotient
	Years	Months	
1	5	10	97
2	5	7	93
3	5	4	93
4	5	5	90
5	6	0	104
6	5	9	113
7	5	11	104
8	5	10	100
9	5	5	95
10	5	7	96
11	5	1	111
12	5	8	90
13	5	7	92
14	5	11	92
15	5	7	92
16	6	2	93
17	6	4	101
18	5	9	103

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Objectives

The eighteen students enrolled in the program will increase their raw scores six to ten points as measured by a pre-post comparison on the Meeting Street School Screening Test within six months.

Conclusion

This writer concludes that since all students exhibited gains in the expected range on the language section of the test, that they were correctly placed and displayed the necessary progress for future success in grade one. It can be further concluded from the gains on the overall test that students were maturationally deficient as hypothesized, and benefitted greatly from the treatment provided. Additionally, this tool did allow the task force to ferret out potential learning disabled students and concentrate on the desired population.

Objective

Misdirected funds in the amount of eighteen thousand, seven hundred dollars ($18,700) will be reduced eighty percent (80%) within six months, as measured by a pre-post comparison of fiscal records.

Conclusion

The results indicate that the initiation of sound selection criteria have totally eliminated misdirected funds. Justification of money being spent for its intended use was evident and did provide students with an opportunity to receive a second chance.

Objective

Ninety-five percent (95%) of the eighteen students enrolled will exhibit readiness for grade one within seven months as measured by a

pre test on the Slosson Intelligence Quotient Test and a pre-post test on the Meeting Street School Screening Test.

Conclusion

This writer concludes that average intelligence, coupled with appropriate screening processes, has enabled one hundred percent (100%) of the selected students to benefit from the Transitional I class. Results of the pre-post tests show definitively that students scored in the desired ranges for motor, language and perceptual skills, thus enabling them to acquire the needed readiness for grade one.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the practicum, the writer makes a variety of recommendations for the Highlands School District. The recommendations are:

That the Meeting Street Program presently used in four of the elementary buildings be expanded to all elementary schools housing kindergarten programs.

That the screening process for selecting students into the Transitional I class be made part of district policy.

That an additional Transitional I class be made available if the referral process yields a sufficient number of students who are in need.

That teachers at the grade one level be given a thorough in-service of what the Transitional I class strives to accomplish, so they can more effectively assist children they will be receiving in ensuing years.

That the Director of Elementary Education be given a budget to procure needed materials to assist with the motor refinement of selected students.

APPENDIX A

SAMPLES OF PRE SELECTION CRITERIA TEACHER COMMENTS

Teacher A

Billy began kindergarten last year (76-77), was not emotionally or socially ready for the adjustment. By doctor's excuse, taken out and has returned this school year (77-78). I have seen some change in him since last year but he is still not at a level satisfactory for kindergarten. His level of concentration is poor as is his memory. He really doesn't seem to try in any work endeavor.

Teacher B

Johnny in my opinion is just about the most ideal student for the Transitional class that I've ever seen. He has ability but is so immature it must be drawn out of him. He works best one-to-one. He does poorly at oral directions unless guided step by step. His memory seems good.

Teacher C

Brian's school day revolves around play. It is his basic concern, learning seems to mean nothing to him. He has been in three kindergartens this year and has learned very little. He recognizes some numbers, but is having a lot of trouble learning the alphabet. His attention span and memory are both poor.

Teacher D

At the beginning of the year Matthew was extremely immature, so much that I doubted his ability to accomplish anything. He has shown some progress, but another year to grow up will be very helpful to Matt. I feel he enjoys his immaturity and the attention he must get at home from it. He needs to work one-to-one and be guided along in a task. To be left alone on any project is sure to turn out wrong, messy and often not complete.

APPENDIX B

SAMPLES OF POST SELECTION CRITERIA TEACHER COMMENTS

Teacher A

I strongly recommend Patrice for the Transitional I class. She is a shy child who prefers to play by herself. Patrice does not know the alphabet in sequence nor can she recognize any of the letters of the alphabet. She also does not know any of the initial consonant sounds. Patrice has a very difficult time putting picture cards in a logical sequence to tell a story. She does know her colors and she can sit still for ten minute intervals. She also recognizes the numerals 0 to 10 and can count in sequence to 5.

I feel that since Patrice is so young, a year to grow both socially and academically will be the best thing for her. At the completion of the Transitional I class I would hope that Patrice will recognize all of the letters of the alphabet and know most of the initial consonant sounds. Also, I anticipate that she will be able to tell a story, with picture cards, in a logical sequence. I feel that she definitely needs this class.

Teacher B

Brian's strengths lie in gross motor development and visual discrimination. Visual memory, auditory discrimination, auditory memory and sequencing, and fine motor control are among his weaknesses.

Brian has a short attention span and his mind wonders from the subject frequently. He is now gaining some success with letter recognition and consonant sounds.

Through the Transitional I Class, Brian should increase his attention span and strengthen his auditory and visual motor activities.

I feel that Brian will achieve much success in the Transitional I Class.

Teacher C

James has made some noticeable gains since the beginning of school. He has not achieved any of the basic skills on the report card. He has not achieved many skills in the language area. He is working on letter recognition. He can count to 5, but cannot achieve a satisfactory level in his math work.

He is immature in relation to the rest of the five year olds. James has difficulty doing group work, both due to a short attention span and difficulty in getting along with his classmates. With individual help he strives to achieve the lesson, and the individual attention has a calming effect on James also.

With the difficulty he is having in Kindergarten, I see very little success in a first grade setting. James needs the individual attention, the reviewing of skills, and less student competition he will receive in Transitional class. I feel this class will benefit James greatly, both in scholastic and emotional maturity.

Teacher D

1. Specific skills achieved:
   - A. Number Readiness:
     - a. Knows basic shapes.
   - B. Reading Readiness:
     - a. Detects likenesses and differences.
2. Specific skills not achieved:
   - A. Number Readiness:
     - a. Does not recognize numerals 1-10.
     - b. Can not match sets to proper numerals.
   - B. Reading Readiness:
     - a. Can not distinguish beginning sounds.
     - b. Does not recognize letters of the alphabet.

Michelle has a very short attention span. She can only follow one step directions. She does not work independently and she does not complete her work in a given time period.

I feel Michelle's main weakness is memory. She seems to have a problem retaining information.

I feel Michelle is not ready for first grade and will benefit from the Transitional I Class.

APPENDIX C

LETTER TO KINDERGARTEN TEACHER/REFERRAL FORM/SELECTION CRITERIA

HIGHLANDS SCHOOL DISTRICT

MEMO TO: Kindergarten Teachers

FROM: David N. Pisani, Administrative Assistant

DATE: May 18, 1977

SUBJECT: TRANSITIONAL CLASS REFERRAL

Please complete the attached form for those students in your room who would benefit from the Transitional Program. Miss Dziuban can provide the Meeting Street Evaluation and your elementary counselor the Slosson testing. Please contact these people DIRECTLY.

Also attached is a copy of the "Selection Order for Transitional I Candidates" which will help you to better understand the type of child who will benefit from Transitional I. Please pay close attention to priority III, "Teacher Opinion," and use the format when completing the referral form. Additionally, the letter being sent to parents, as well as permission forms, have been included for your information.

The forms must be completed and returned by May 27, 1977.

Thank you for making the selection process more relevant.

bmm

cc: Superintendent
Director of Pupil Personnel Services
Director of Elementary Education
Elementary Principals
Head Teacher
Elementary Counselors
Reading Teacher - Perception
Transitional I Teacher

HIGHLANDS SCHOOL DISTRICT

TRANSITIONAL ONE CLASS - TEACHER REFERRAL

Student's Name _____ School _____

Address _____ Teacher _____

_____ Telephone _____

Parent/Guardian _____ _____
(Mother) (Father)

I. Meeting Street Screening Test:

Attach Copy

II. Slosson Intelligence Test:

C.A. _____ M.A. _____ I.Q. _____ Date _____

III. Teacher's Opinion: (See Priority III of Selection Order for Transitional I Candidates)

_____ _____
Teacher's Signature Principal/Head Teacher Signature

NOTE: Return to David N. Pisani, Administrative Assistant, by May 27, 1977

bmm

HIGHLANDS SCHOOL DISTRICT

MEMO TO: Elementary Principals
Head Teacher
Kindergarten Teachers
Transitional I Teacher
Elementary Counselors
Reading Teacher - Perception

FROM: David N. Pisani - Administrative Assistant

DATE: May 18, 1977

SUBJECT: SELECTION ORDER FOR TRANSITIONAL I CANDIDATES

PRIORITY ORDER — SELECTION CRITERIA

I. Psychological Recommendation
Comments: Students who are tested by a psychologist and recommended for placement will be given first consideration

II. A. Meeting Street School Screening Test
1. MSSST Scores - 30-50 standard test score range
2. Language Scores - 4-10 standard test score range

B. Slosson IQ Scores - 90 and up
Comments: Students scoring in the standard test score range for language and the total score of the Meeting Street School Screening Test (MSSST) who achieve IQ's of 90 or better will be given consideration next.

III. Teacher Opinion
Comments: An assessment of a student's achievement to date and perception for future needs must be strongly considered. When referring a child, the teacher will speak to the following areas:

1. Student Readiness
   a. Specific skills achieved
   b. Specific skills not achieved
2. Student Maturity (Academic and Emotional)
   a. Specific characteristics acceptable for his/her age
   b. Specific characteristics unacceptable for his/her age
3. Hoped for Outcomes After Completion of Transitional I Class (What observable gains do you anticipate the child making?)
4. Statement indicating the strength of your recommendation.

PRIORITY ORDER	SELECTION CRITERIA
IV.	A. Slosson IQ Score - Deviant B. Meeting Street School Screening Test 1. MSSST - 30-50 standard score range 2. Language Score - 4-10 standard score range Comments: Any student scoring as per the stated criteria will be given next consideration for placement.
V.	A. Meeting Street School Screening Test 1. Deviant MSSST score 2. Deviant language score B. Slosson IQ score - Deviant C. Age Level Comments: Students falling into this level will be prioritized with emphasis being placed on age and language scores which seem to be the best indicators for success or failure in grade one.
VI.	Exceptions to all other criteria. Comments: Students, who fit none of the first five priorities but were referred by teachers, will be screened and a decision will be made to determine whether they should be accepted or recommended for further testing.

NOTE: All selection criteria being used have been carefully analyzed based on data gathered from Transitional I Class and Meeting Street Kindergartens. Hopefully, this type of input will assist in the best possible placement of students for this class.

bmm

HIGHLANDS SCHOOL DISTRICT

TRANSITIONAL ONE PROGRAM

DATE: _____

NAME OF STUDENT _____

_____ YES - I would like my son/daughter to participate in the Transitional One Program.

_____ NO - I do not want my son/daughter to participate in the Transitional One Program

_____
Signature of Parent/Guardian

bmm

LETTER TO PARENTS

HIGHLANDS SCHOOL DISTRICT
1704 BROADVIEW BOULEVARD
NATRONA HEIGHTS, PA 15065

NICK J. STARESINIC
SUPERINTENDENT

SAMUEL D. SIEBERT
BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR
BOARD SECRETARY

ADMINISTRATIVE CENTER
412/226-2400

June 8, 1977

Dear Parent:

Your son/daughter _____ has been selected to participate in our Transitional One Program for the school year 1977-78. The selection of students for this program is based on teacher recommendations, tests scores, and additional information.

The Transitional One Program is located in the Fawn Elementary School and is offered to students who have been identified as not being ready for the formal first grade classroom. The Transitional One students are involved with appropriate learning experiences and interrelated language activities with strong emphasis placed on auditory and visual-motor activities. Transportation is provided to the Fawn Elementary School by the district.

If you wish to have your child participate in the Transitional One Program, complete the attached form and return in the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope by Wednesday, June 22, 1977.

If you have any questions concerning selection of your son/daughter, or the program, please contact your building principal or guidance counselor for an appointment.

Sincerely,

David N. Pisani
Administrative Assistant

bmn

Enclosure

cc/ Superintendent
Director of Elementary Education
Director of Pupil Personnel Services
Elementary Principals
Head Teacher
Elementary Counselors
Reading Teacher - Perception
Transitional I Teacher

APPENDIX E

LETTERS TO ELEMENTARY PRINCIPALS/HEAD TEACHER

HIGHLANDS SCHOOL DISTRICT

MEMO TO: Elementary Principals - Head Teacher

FROM: David Pisani - Administrative Assistant

DATE: June 1, 1977

SUBJECT: TRANSITIONAL I CLASS

Twenty-six students were referred by kindergarten teachers and principals for placement in the 1977-78 transitional I class. Since the class can accommodate only eighteen students, a selection committee has prioritized all students using a variety of criteria to ascertain which eighteen would be given first preference. As a result, letters explaining the program and giving parents the option of accepting or rejecting placement are being sent home on June 8, 1977 to the parents whose children are among the first eighteen. Replies will be expected by June 22 at which time they will be assessed. Should all replies be positive, then placement for the class will be complete. However, if the class is not at maximum count, the elementary counselors will make personal contacts with the parents of the remaining students until the list is exhausted or placement is complete.

The following students from your building(s) have been selected and their parents notified:

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

The letter attached is for your information and to be reviewed with your kindergarten teacher(s). If parents call you or your teachers, please answer questions as positively as possible. Should they have questions you cannot answer, refer them to me.

Your cooperative effort at the building level will make parents more at ease and assist them in making the best decision for their children. Thank you.

ms

cc: Superintendent
Director, Elementary Education
Director, Pupil Personnel Services
M. Sullivan
B. Dziuban
J. Harned
T. Kernan

HIGHLANDS SCHOOL DISTRICT

MEMO TO: Elementary Principals
Head Teacher

FROM: David Pisani - Administrative Assistant

DATE: June 29, 1977

SUBJECT: TRANSITIONAL I CLASS

As you may remember from an earlier memo, twenty-six students were referred for Transitional I Class. A prioritized list was established by the selection committee, using the appropriate guidelines, and parents of the first eighteen students were surveyed. As a result of the survey, all eighteen students have been placed in the 1977-78 Transitional I Class. Those students not placed will be re-evaluated by Miss Dziuban to see if they might benefit from other programs in the district as they proceed to grade one. Your active interest in pursuing possible answers for making their adjustment to grade one will be expected.

The following students from your building(s) will attend Transitional I Class in September, 1977.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Your effort at the building level has been most helpful and greatly appreciated. Our counselors and Miss Dziuban have been most diligent and tactful in their communication with parents and have been instrumental in obtaining affirmative responses. Thanks to all for your support.

ms

cc: Superintendent
Director, Elementary Ed.
Director, Pupil Personnel Ser.
M. Sullivan
B. Dziuban
J. Harned
T. Kernan
Kindergarten Teachers

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